

N i a g a r a - o n - t h e - L a k e

O n t a r i o



Location: Ontario, Canada
Type: Greyfield / Infill
Year Design: 1996
Status: Under construction.
Size: 45 Acres
Contact: The Village
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Niagara-on-the-Lake, voted "Canada's Prettiest Town" in 1997, is a lovely and idiosyncratic village alongside Lake Ontario that boasts an impressive collection of 18th and 19th century architecture. Most of these buildings are simple brick and wooden boxes with little decoration but exquisite proportions, as can be found in similar Loyalist outpost communities. Unique to Niagara-on-the-Lake, however, is the informal arrangement of the buildings. Although the houses are set in a traditional street grid, the landscaping and setbacks vary constantly, creating a lively and casual street space.

The subject property comprises 45 acres on the edge of the historic core. It sits adjacent to one of the town's only attempts at suburbanism: a looping cul-de-sac subdivision of 1970s vintage, quite pleasant but completely distinct from Niagara-on-the-Lake's architectural and urban traditions. The objective of the plan was to create a self-sustaining mixed-use neighborhood that could act as a center for the adjacent subdivision and mediate between the town's older (gridded) and newer (curving) urbanism.



The plan takes advantage of its highway-side location by placing a concave main street of three-story mixed-use buildings at its southern edge. This street terminates on a hardscaped square with an open air market and a prominent corner site suitable for a restaurant or brewery. Heading north from the square is an extremely narrow shopping street that leads to a central triangular green, fronted by a health club to the west, a hotel or assisted-living facility to the north, and live/work townhouses to the south. The loop back to the main street is completed by another street of live/work units. Most of the parking for the commercial buildings is provided at mid-block, where deep lots also allow for artisan/workshop additions to the backs of the buildings. With the exception of a post office and library directly north of the hotel, the remainder of the site is given over to residential use in the form of apartments, rowhouses, and single- and two- family houses. Following an architectural and urban code, these houses are being built in historic styles, reviving the practice of traditional building in Niagara-on-the-Lake.